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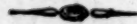
Strictures,

IN

VERSE,

ON

The Performances at the Theatre-Royal,



PRICE TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE.

ENTRANCE

THESE

OR

THE HISTORY OF THE TOWN OF

THE TOWN OF

THE TOWN OF

THE TOWN OF

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THE TOWN OF

Strictures,

IN

VERSE,

ON

The Performances at the Theatre-Royal,



TOWARDS

THE CLOSE OF THE SEASON OF

1799.

The best actors in the world; either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, scene undivideable, or poem unlimited: *Seneca* cannot be too heavy, nor *Plautus* too light. For the law of wit and the liberty, these are the only men.

SHAKESPEARE.

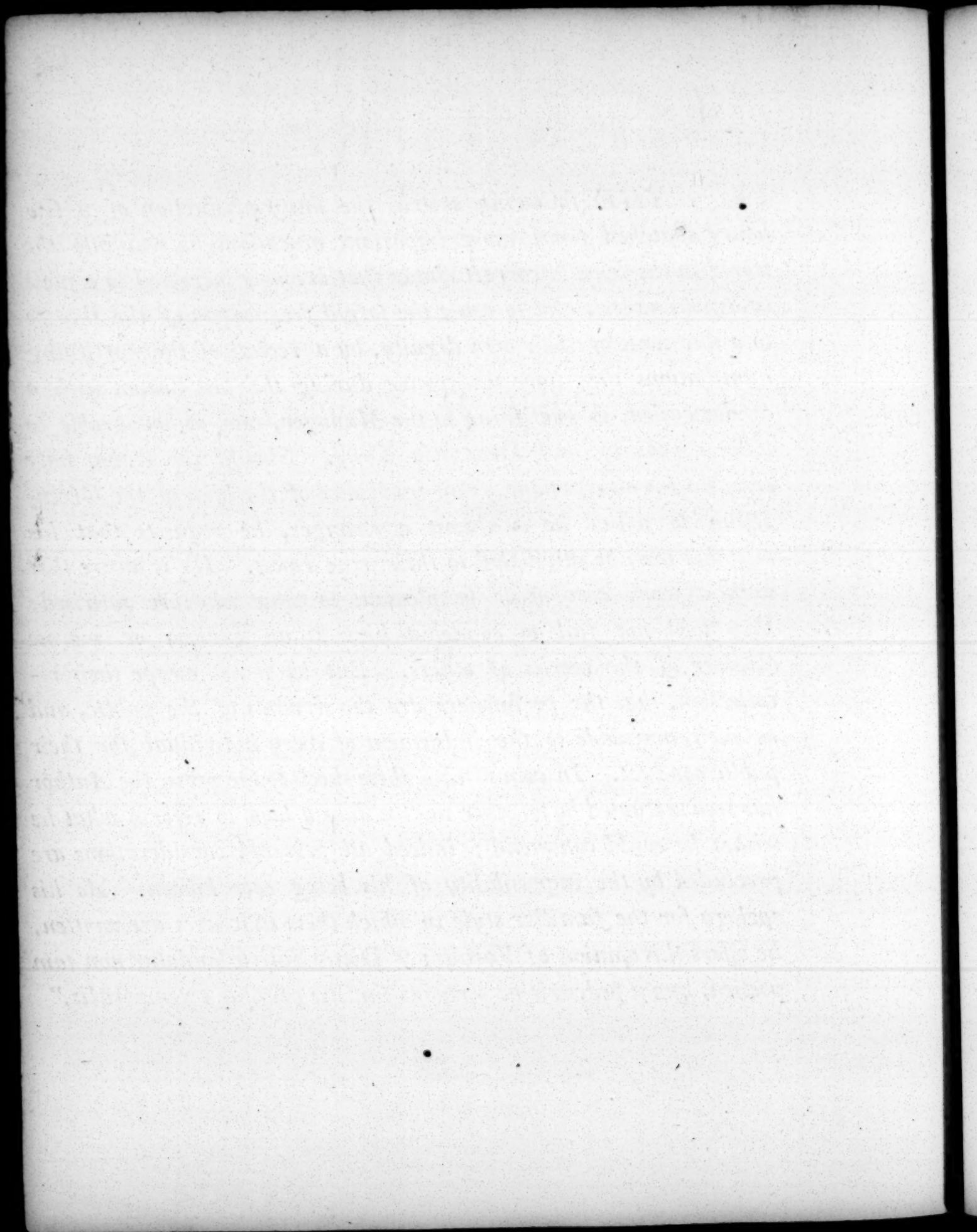
Printed and Sold by Bacon, Norwich; J. Wright, Piccadilly, and Robert Baldwin, Paternoster-Row, London.—
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PRICE TWO SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE.



45.
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680.

THE following sketch, the hasty production of a few hours snatched from more important avocations, is sent into the world in the hope to correct abuses that are now increased to a most enormous excess, and to rouse the torpid frequenters of the theatre to a due sense of their own dignity, by a recital of the mortifying humiliations they have undergone during the last Season with a condescension, so gratifying to the Manager, and so honourable to their sensibility and Dramatic Taste. Should the author have erred in his observations, from ignorance of the laws of the Green-Room to which he is almost a stranger, he requests that his mistakes may be attributed to their true cause. He is aware that such a work can never be pleasant to those who are satirised; they will not fail to condemn him as an envious or morose observer of the merits of others. But let it not escape their recollection, that the performers are the servants of the public, and as such, amenable to the judgement of every individual for their public conduct. In committing these sheets to the press, the Author has been actuated by no other motive than a hope to reform what he wishes he could commend; indeed all personal considerations are precluded by the impossibility of his being ever known. As his apology for the familiar style in which these strictures are written, he offers this opinion of Vossius; "*Dictio Satiræ laudatur non tam poetica, quam pedestris ac sermoni similis, peneque extemporalis.*"



STRICTURES

ON

The Performances

AT

THE NORWICH THEATRE.



TOO long, insulted SENSE, thy wrath hath slept,
 Too long hath TASTE in calm endurance wept,
 While FOLLY dares, by sufferance grown great,
 Ereft her throne, and glares in tinsel state,
 Where once to thee we faw an altar rife,
 And ran in crowds to join the facrifice;
 Near, (thy anointed) WIT and VIRTUE flood,
 Reform'd the wicked, and confirm'd the good,
 Instructed youth, exhilarated age,
 And taught mankind to venerate THE STAGE.

Come then in all thy majesty array'd,
 And with thee lead along the Critic Maid,*

Preferr'd

* See Dr. Johnson's Allegory on Criticism; Rambler, Vol. I. No. 3.

Preferr'd by JUSTICE, from her earliest youth,
 To bear HER sceptre and the torch of TRUTH,
 Whose pure irradiations clearly bright
 Dispel the mists that cloud a mortal's sight,
 Dart through the veil that shrouds imposing state,
 Tho' ART confound and FALSEHOOD complicate,
 Pierce the gay robes the slaves of FOLLY wear,
 And shew all objects as they really are.

Be mine the task, thus aided, to review
 The merits of the *well selected* few
 By BRUNTON wisely chosen to amuse
 An audience whom he boldly dares abuse;
 Be 't mine to shew these poor fantastic elves
 (In other shapes than those their mirrors give) themselves.

To rank by merit rais'd, the first we view
 Is BRUNTON, master of the motley crew;
 And while his public character I scan,
 I lose the manager to draw the man:
 Alike his favour and his hate defy,
 Securely hid in bless'd obscurity.

In forming BRUNTON, nature has confin'd
 Her favours solely to his powers of mind;

She

She niggard gave a person, small in size,
 Obdurate features, little piercing eyes :
 In short, a figure that she clearly meant,
*Shylock** or *Richard*† well should represent;
 And such his force of action, such his art,
 In the performance of the villain's part,
 That some, astonish'd by the effort, ask
 How he sustains in life, his moral task?
 And, wond'ring, find in his domestic plan
 He seems an upright, friendly, honest man.

Nor less at home, in all he does or says,
 When *Dornton*,‡ *Grey*,§ or *Flowerdale* || he plays :
 Attentive still to all that tends to please,
 He captivates us by uncommon ease ;
 So unconstrain'd the words and actions flow,
 His errors, great or small, we never care to know.

Since such thy judgment, BRUNTON, why permit
 The nightly insults we so kindly fit ?
 'Tis your's to cater for the public taste,
 To furnish amply, yet allow no waste ;

Such

* Merchant of Venice. † Richard the Third.

‡ The Road to Ruin. § The Chapter of Accidents. || Lionel and Clarissa.

Such regulation only can be just
Between your public and your private trust.

'Tis your's to cast the parts of ev'ry play,
To adjudge their difference, and their merits weigh ;
And if or censure or applause is due
For *general effect*, 'tis giv'n to you.*
Which was the most deserv'd, when t'other night
Whilst all the house was weeping at the sight
Of dead *Statira*,† BEACHEM rush'd to tell
(Could he have told) how *Syfigambis* fell,
And metamorphos'd most ingeniously
LEE'S *Alexander* to "a merry tragedie?"

To instance such examples of neglect
Were endless; two poor dramas I select,
So vilely butcher'd ransack where you please
You cannot parallel a pair like these.

The first is *Romeo and Juliet*—
Where found you *Lord and Lady Capulet*?

Came

* This precept an audience should never forget—Were a Tailor to bring home an ill made coat, would his employer impute the fault to the journeymen?—Certainly not. The master would be responsible. So is a manager—he cuts out and ought to superintend the work.

† Mr. Beachem, Sen. a toothless old man, tailor to the Theatre-Royal, Norwich, and sent upon the stage whenever the inferior actors are too indolent, or too impudent to attend.

Came they from *Billingsgate* or *Southwark* fair?

There only could they gain that noble air;—

Whence came the *County Paris*? *Tibalt* whence?

None could exhibit more contempt for sense!—

How excellent the young *Benvolio*!

What “dear perfection” too in *Romeo*!—

The audience saw and deign’d a hearty laugh,

In compliment to thy *selected* raff.

The Orphan next I name, but will not dwell

On horrors which (if there) you know so well.

But ah! in future shield us, I implore,

Against *Castalio* and *Polydore*;^{*}

So shall your timely charity prevent

Occasion for severer chastisement.

Next *HUDDART* stalks, the brogue his birth betrays,

And *spakes* an Irish lad in *aul* he says.

The hero of the Tragic muse we trace,

She fits triumphant on his solemn face.

* A Benefit Play is not perhaps a fair instance.—On such nights the rules of the Theatre have *rationally enough* given the performers an imprescriptible right to commit any absurdities that natural dullness will permit them to fancy.—But similar examples are not rare, every performance teems with them; in “*the Provoked Husband*,” a be-spoken play, the Actors were as contemptibly deficient as in either of the tragedies the text alludes to. When four or five happened to be upon the stage at a time, conscious of individual imbecility, they huddled together like sheep, for mutual defence and assistance.

He learn'd there were eight parts of speech at school,
 And thence determines emphasis *by rule* ;
 Just, as the fabled deities of fate,
 To each he knows to give an equal weight,
 Nor preference allows to word or thought,
 Save that precedence which the author taught.

But, mark the difference, what I here would blame,
 Is not the fault, *monotony* we name.
 His voice in true Hibernian cadence pours,
 And in a breath he growls, bawls, shouts, and roars,
 And down and up, and up and down he flies,
 Alike when *Cassio* brawls, or *Desdemona* dies.

In dirty drefs, with melancholy mien,
 Lo! SEYMOUR comes unwilling to the scene.
 Too negligent to get the words by rote,
 Too absent to remember them, if got,
 He twitches, stammers, stamps, and thinks in vain,
 Lifts his right arm, then lets it fall again,
 Thrusts out his neck, and in confusion waits
 The fatal line for which he hesitates.
 The fatal line the friendly prompter gives,
 Again he stops, again his friend relieves,

Scene

Scene after scene drags on, the fifth act o'er
 His "occupation" urges him no more,
 Nor envies he the plaudits others won
 Content to know his nightly labour's *done*.*

Can chilling apathy like this be known
 And pass unpunish'd by th' insulted town?
 Can men observe, and yet so calmly treat
 The negligence they ought to reprobate?
 With pain their cold indifference I see,
 And own the audience far more dull than he.

Box, Pit, and Gallery all appear to vie
 Who shall give most to BLANCHARD'S pleasantry.
 And while chaste humour challenges applause,
 Or great conception admiration draws,
 Delighted we shall still the tribute grant,
 Nor e'er for BANNISTER or FAWCETT pant.
 Consistent strictly whatsoe'er he acts,
 No look, no motion from the part detracts,
 However different, we perceive no loss,
 The gay *George Philpot*,† or the grave *Pangloss*,‡
 The *Rhyming Butler*,§ or *Squire Tally-ho*,||—
 Which best he plays 'twere difficult to shew,

B 2

Nor

* Mr. Seymour is unquestionably a man of ability, and therefore his apparent neglect
 of professional duties is the more to be lamented.

† The Citizen.

‡ The Heir at Law.

§ Lovers Vows.

|| Fontainebleau.

Nor need the search extreme enquiry move,
 Since all combin'd consummate merit prove.

And here excuse me if I turn aside
 A little from my path—for know, with pride
 I look on private virtues that shall soar
 Above, when this short scene of life is o'er,
 And give to eternal happiness and fame
 The father's and the husband's tender name.

Too long the unjust reproach has Ireland borne
 That all her sons have diffidence forsworn;
 Too long has every bashful English ass
 Proclaim'd that Irish lads still “shine in brass.”
 See one adorn'd with every gentle grace,
 Steps forth to vindicate his injur'd race;
 A youth he seem who scarce has number'd more
 Auspicious years than make him twenty-four:
 In manly beauty's mould his form was fram'd
 For female conquest—Dwyer he is nam'd.

With *timid caution* he begins to speak—
Judicious pauses every sentence break,
 A *high descent* his easy manner proves,
 The graces still attendant as he moves;

So

So perfectly accomplish'd, all declare
 Th' enchanting *Doricourt* himself is here.
 No vulgar rant, no face-distorting grin
 Nor low interpolations e'er creep in,
 But chaste and *always perfect* in his part,
 Although the mirror of the actor's art,
 He never struts, nor stamps, nor seems to say
 "Applaud, ye fools, applaud, for well ye may,"
 But falters (*modest soul*) so much, you'd swear
 He'd quite forgotten what his speeches were.

Sometimes 'mongst low comedians we see
 (But never should, were all as great as he)
 A noisy stroller in impassion'd scene,
 With boisterous air and most obstreperous mien,
 In threat'ning attitude on tiptoe stand—
 Aloft, like Jove, he whirls his *red* right hand,
 Which ever and anon descending gives
 Impressive strokes that still his left receives.
 As some Churchwarden 'midst a parish crowd
 When rates run high and opposition loud,
 To give his arguments a double weight
 And make his elocution truly great,
 At every other word a well-tim'd blow
 Proves beyond question what he means to shew,

At once he strikes his audience and his hand,
And none the strong conviction can withstand.

In DWYER no such shallow tricks appear,
He nor offends the eye nor wounds the ear;
But *modest nature* in his heart presides,
Directs each act and each conception guides,
In scenes of pathos, gaiety or whim,
All own they never saw *an actor* like to him.

Next sniveling INCHBALD waddles on to claim
His well-earn'd portion of dramatic fame.
In him the noble quality is seen
That ladies love in China mandarin.
His head still shaking serves to shew a face,
That grins in one fix'd stare of low grimace.
As *Philpot* I allow him well enough,
Applaud his palsy, and admire his cough,
But cannot be so purblind to permit
Such gross vulgarities in *Capulet*,*
Nor is the happy gift of patience mine,
To hear, unmov'd, a maudlin *Worc'ster* † whine.

With

* *Romeo and Juliet*.

† Perhaps the reader was present when *King Henry the Fourth* was murdered with more than democratical ferocity, by his MAJESTY'S SERVANTS at Norwich, on Saturday, May 18, 1799.

With steady gait and unobtrusive air,
 To please, his utmost hope, his constant care,
 See BENNET comes in well adapted dress,
 And our applause solicits with success.
 Should some, too nice, find little to commend,
 Candour must own there's nothing to offend;
 And when so nearly good and bad divide,
 My wishes bid me lean to merit's side.
 But, if we all the various parts survey
 That BENNET personates in farce and play,
 All ages, ranks, the Cobler and the King,
 Sent first to weep and afterwards to sing,
 Allow'd to perfect no peculiar cast,
 Each new employment differing from the last,
 We grant to him no common talents fall,
 Who can be so respectable in all.

In person neat, in looks extremely young,
 With lengthen'd step strides forth the Prince of Song;*
 A follower of the operatic brood,
 He forms on DIDELOT's† plan *his attitude*;
 And when an imitation can be had,
 He grasps the occasion be it good or bad;

So

* Mr. Philipps.

† Principal dancer at the Opera House.

So quickly too these movements pass, they're gone
 Before th' intention is or can be known,
 In vain their meaning we attempt to find,
 They leave our comprehension far behind,
 And give to serious scenes a lavish air—
 Extravagance the English least can bear.
 But such endeavours must not be disgrac'd
 Because from inexperience badly plac'd,
 For when applied correctly, they amend
 The taste of those whom now they most offend.

Nor are his merits as a singer known—
 Although possessed of sweet and steady tone,
 His, not the voice so powerfully strong
 That ever captivates the gaping throng,
 Best pleas'd with him who sings most loud and long;
 Aptly in tune and fancifully chaste,
 He proves a rich luxuriance of taste,
 Whene'er he varies we improvement trace,
 Yet scarce he sings a bar without a grace.
 Too elegant to charm the general mind
 His proper worth proficient only find,
 And connoisseurs are here so very few,
 He lacks the praise most eminently due:

WHITE's useful pow'rs attention next command.
 He draws the humorist with a lively hand;
 Delineates skilfully declining age,
 Its singularity, or four, or sage,
 And paints with richer tints and deeper dyes
 As prejudices change or passions rise.
 Yet there's a fault, and could it be remov'd
 His acting would be lighten'd and improv'd—
 A pompous utterance that loads the sense,
 And tortures actor, words, and audience.
 This once corrected, WHITE may reach with ease
 The summit of his art—the certain way to please.

In rustics gay and natural, 'tis strange
 That dress so totally should BENNET* change.
 A gentlemanly coat benumbs his heart,
 And ever makes him drowsy through the part.
 As *Henry Woodville*† or *Eugene*‡ employ'd,
 In thought and action still the self same void,
 Monotonously dull he saunters by
 With most unmeaning insipidity;
 Beneath our praise and scarce contempt above
 We tolerate but never can approve.

* Mr. J. Bennet. † The Wheel of Fortune. ‡ The Agreeable Surprise.

Pick'd like a courier's horse, for greatest speed;
 On all occasions sent to play or plead;
 Call'd at a moment's notice to appear
 And personate a peasant or a peer,
 We know not, LINDOE, whether most to admire
 Thy arts of pleasing or thy prompt desire.
 But while you emulate a BRUNTON's fame
 Avoid the servile imitator's shame;
 However good originals attract,
 The copy's seldom valued tho' exact.
 By gifts unequal Nature too deny'd
 That imitation here should be apply'd;
 He's slow from weakness where with pow'r too great
 You bellow sentences to give his weight;
 And what in him pathetic tone we call,
 Transferr'd to you would be a shriek or drawl.
 Secure of praise, to native sense apply,
 And scorn the adventitious aid of mimicry.*

Next enters Paddy MORETON, senseless rogue,
 Remark'd for native purity of brogue,

And

* It is possible that Mr. Lindoe has unintentionally caught Mr. Brunton's manner from frequent and close observation of his acting, and is perhaps ignorant that such a similitude exists. But whether acquired by accident or design the effect is the same.

And that broad vacuum of unmeaning face
 To which his characters owe all their grace;
 For there the painter can adapt with ease
 As on a board, expression to the case;
 A few harsh lineaments and huge black eye
 Bespeak a ruffian* or a jailor* nigh,
 And Shakespeare's wit in rich carbuncle glows
 Resplendent fix'd on *Bardolph's* ruby nose.
 Nor need the artist loss of credit dread
 From motions of the body, arms, or head,
 Since all his parts demonstratively prove
 Mechanic rules mechanic MORETON move.

Thus from a weather-house, approaching rain
 Untwists the catgut and sends forth the man—
 The clouds dispell'd and past the dripping show'r,
 He's seen no more—the creature of an hour.
 So when the ready prompter cut the string
 That loosens MORETON from the appointed wing,
 Along he strides, unconscious of an aim,
 Tells his dull tale and exits as he came.

WHEELER † plays oft and generally well,
 Yet might with more attention more excel,

In

* I have taken this Gentleman in his best characters.

† I think Mr. Wheeler one of the best and most useful actors we have.

In Fops diverting, but by far too loud,
 He speaks as if haranguing in a crowd;
 As *Cassell* * thunders out his am'rous fears,
 As *Sparkle* † elegantly stuns our ears;
 From lungs Stentorian words inflate rebound,
 And Sense is smother'd at its birth by Sound.

WORDSWORTH appears so seldom 'twere unfair

To think of painting what his merits are,

And if in future he's so seldom seen

He must adopt the motto "we have been."

Yet let me mention while the impress'ion's warm

His exquisite attempt to sing "*The Storm*."

We're rapt in wonder as his strains commence!!!

Did ever sound so echo to the sense!!!

For though old Boreas ‡ rail'd till he'd been hoarse

WORDSWORTH's resolv'd his bellowing should be worse,

And therefore bawls with Hyperborean force.

Each tone he follows too with nicest skill,

The rough, the deep, the harsh, the loud, the shrill,

'Tis scarce to be believ'd, but in his throat

"The shrill shriek struggles with the harsh hoarse note,"

And not more excellent the God sublime

Than he in execution, tune and time.

But

* Lovers' Vows. † Which is the Man? ‡ See the Song.

But while he sings "the dangers of the sea"*
 How well his gestures with his words agree!
 To action's rule † a systematic slave,
 He keeps a motion fast as any wave,
 And when the bawling boatswain gives the cue,
 He even deigns to "make wry faces" with the crew.*

The power of CHESNUTT's own'd without dispute
 Through all Starvation's empire absolute.
 The Goddesses Famine, meagre, faint and grim,
 Looks stout and healthful when compar'd with him,
 Who seems adapted with the nicest art
 To act *the starv'd Apothecary's* part.
 An unaccustom'd aid THE BARD receives
 For here his picture animated lives.

Then why desert the well-appointed plan,
 To maim and mutilate the gentleman? ‡
 As soon might TAYLOR § with the Mara vie
 As you affect to ape gentility,

Unless

* See the Song.

† "Suit the action to the word."

‡ The question ought rather to be "Why does the Manager thrust this poor man into a situation where he must necessarily become ridiculous?—In this and in every other instance where I am unfortunately obliged to censure an actor for his performance of a *particular line of character*, I request it may be understood that the reproof is primarily due to Mr. BRUNTON, while the performer who may be otherwise a deserving man, is unavoidably made the object of public reprehension and contempt.

§ Mrs. Taylor.

Unless indeed to skip and gabble on
 'Till all the allotted sentences be done,
 Ridiculously pert in all your ways,
 Good breeding proves, or elegance displays.

Thus in a clock we've seen a magpie plac'd,
 To humour an eccentric turn of taste,
 Which mov'd by quaint contrivance, has the pow'r
 To hop about and chatter forth the hour ;
 So CHESNUTT's mimic motions nature mock,
 His spring the prompter, and the stage his clock.

Last WHITMORE * comes (the face that owns that name
 Is yet unconscious of the blush of shame)
 Another Irishman, of solid skull
 Immensely thick, impenetrably dull,
 One only for a puppet-shew-man fit,
 To move the dolls and retail *Punch's* wit,
 Or warble forth with rich Hibernian din
 The charming air of " Gentlemen, walk in." †

But, fee! in sad array, a grisly band
 Of half a dozen Scene-men crowded stand! Taught

* I understand Mr. Whitmore is a very good scene painter. It is to be lamented that he should quit a profession where he might receive emolument and praise, for a pursuit which can only terminate in his disgrace.

† *Graius ingenium, Graius dedit ore rotundo*
Musa loqui.

HORACE.

Taught like the rest to fill with ready grace
 A noble station or an empty place,
 In mobs to riot, in proud pageants prance,
 To join the senate or the savage dance,
 Triumphant *Alexander's* entry * guard
 Or trundle on and off *Bashaw Blue Beard*,*
 They eager press, ambitious of a name,
 To seize the wreath their equal merits claim;
 And let the worthies have it, since at least
 They help to serve the *reasonable feast*.†

Fain

* Among the praiseworthy and dignified efforts of the present *Arbiter Elegantiarum*, be recorded for ever these glorious spectacles! The gorgeous procession in *Blue Beard* shall remain for ages unequalled in elegance of design, unrivalled in splendor of execution! Ten dirty and tattered accoutrements for the slaves, four flags, one brass hilted sword, one gilded wheelbarrow (for the MIGHTY ABOMELIQUE) and one newly painted *Palanquin*, made up the grand display of dresses and decorations exhibited at this sumptuous and superb solemnity!! Most magnificent procession!!! Most magnificent Manager!!!!

Mr. Brunton will tell us that the stage is too confined to admit of splendid ornaments—And did he never hear that taste might be demonstrated in the carving of a cabinet, as well as in the architecture of an amphitheatre?

† I allude to the Manager's thanksgiving and promissory speech at the conclusion of the season, as reported in the Norwich and Bury newspapers. "At the close of the play on Saturday evening, Mr. Brunton came forward to return his and the performers' thanks to the public for the liberal encouragement they had experienced during the course of the season. In adverting to the short time the patent would remain with him, he said, although it was short, his efforts should by no means be relaxed but his utmost endeavours employed to render the theatre a place of *rational entertainment*." How omnipotent is Truth! I stand convinced—assured the Manager's efforts will not be relaxed, *because they cannot*.

By

Fain would I “female failings lightly pass”
 And let AGLAIA † lead them to their glass,*
 But injur’d JUSTICE with imperious voice
 Arraigns my candour and forbids my choice,
 Asserts a GODDARD’S and a BRUNTON’S cause,
 And frowning dares me to withhold applause,
 The fairy forms enchanted I survey,
 Confess their magic, and the charm obey.

And see to bind the spell and fix her sway
 With smiles she hither bends her willing way,
 Her artless, unaffected grace we view,
 And own the *Desdemona* SHAKESPEARE drew,
 Or should she *Warbergh’s* ‡ wretched Countess take
 We sympathize with guilt for GODDARD’S sake.

But

By the way—Having constantly observed the Editors of the Newspapers at the Theatre, I am no longer at a loss to account for their kind and occasional panegyrics, or their still more kind and continual forbearance—Though I allow they seldom bestow their praises without reason, yet their criticisms would meet a readier belief, if tempered with discreet and due remonstrances.—*Sapienti sat.*

* For this reason—All the Ladies in the Theatre are ever perfect in their characters, neat in dress and person, useful and ready in their respective situations. Wherever they fail, it is from error in judgement, not want of attention. I have no doubt but many of their defects will henceforth be abandoned.

† One of the Graces.

‡ Mrs. Haller.

But having seen perfection, can I bear
 So good an actress should be forc'd to appear
 In every character which scarce her haste
 Allows to read—*because 'tis in her cast?*
 Impossible!—nor is the man her friend
 Who errors, tho' so venial, can commend
 I set her virtues at the highest rate,
 But can as well her faults* appreciate.

With *supernatural* air comes mighty KENT,
 “ She toils to give the crude conception vent;”
 Distorts her frame with most convulsive throes,
 And is most *woeful* in *Alicia's* woes;
 With turgid whine protracts each tragic word,
 And takes enormous pains† to be—*absurd*.

The TAYLOR next her greatness heaves ‡ along,
 Lifts her right arm aloft, and 'gins her song.

* Miss Goddard, though far from the summit of professional acquirement, has yet all the qualifications which lead to perfection. But if she inconsiderately engage to represent every part that may be offered to her, through haste she will inevitably contract habits, which can never after be relinquished.—Already the precipice presents itself. Miss G. frequently forgets herself and her character, which could not happen had she time and perseverance enough to give the necessary previous attention. She is one of the few whose genius promises greatness, and whose talents ought not to be neglected.

† To Miss KENT, I particularly recommend the note at the end. I am told she is a sensible girl, and wishes her errors to be pointed out, that she may correct them.

‡ Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheav'd

His vastness.

MILTON.

Perhaps too flat, too sharp, too late or soon,
 But certainly not both in time and tune.
 The obedient Band their ears and fingers strain
 To keep in unison! * but all in vain,—
 Her genius, by no common rules confin'd,
 Leaves the poor flagging fidler far behind,
 Who, groveling minion! hesitates to adore
 Her tones, because he ne'er heard such before. †
 Be mine the safer and the wiser part
 To yield the little knowledge gain'd from art;
 With patient ear the high-flown strain attend,
 “Nor snarl at fancies which no skill can mend.”

Who BENNET ‡ hates not, BLANCHARD must approve,
 Their merits with such equal paces move.
 Ah! had kind Fate but made them man and wife,
 How comfortably both had slept through life,
 To them a life of undisturb'd repose,
 One soft, perpetual, and congenial doze.

Pert

* The first Violin constantly plays in unison with the Singer at the Norwich Theatre.

† Mrs. Taylor possesses a most sweet, powerful, and extensive voice, but unfortunately she has also a most beautiful set of teeth. To display these, she extends her mouth so unmercifully, that some parts of her intonation are scarcely human; in singing her articulation is totally destroyed, and in speaking frequently impeded.

‡ Mr. J. Bennet.—See his character, page 17.

Pert as a parrot—primitively prim, such will she will,
 See WHITE along the stage superbly swim, * alike
 Secure to captivate supreme respect
 She apes the airs all actresses affect.
 In every part her unrelenting mien
 Keeps its frigidity through every scene
 No force of thought her "February face"
 Can move, or tempt one muscle from its place,
 Eternal frost binds up each icy limb
 And still preserves her *—primitively prim.

THALIA mourn'd her loss, when ÆCCEY died,
 But HENLEY came, the Muse's tears were dried.
 Her power of mind and person well supplies
 The widow'd *Cheshire's* † ample dignities,
 To *Gloomly* ‡, Reynolds' literary maid,
 Her acting gives the necessary aid,

Assume

* This lady sometimes treats the public with a song. I could wish Mr. WORDSWORTH would obligingly consent to indulge the audience, and join in a duet with Mrs. WHITE.—From such an union, what might we not expect?

Ambo florentes ætatibus, Arcades ambo,

Et cantare pares et respondere parati.

VIRGIL.

† Of the Burlesque Song, Mrs. Henley gave in this character, too much cannot be said. If I be correct this Lady was a pupil of the celebrated LINLEY, and, with such a voice, must be more capable of singing serious airs than any other performer in the Theatre.

‡ *Laugh when you can.* * One of the precious morceaux of the modern playwrights. Such execrable trash was never before submitted to an audience of higher rank than an assembly

Assume whate'er she will, such comic art
Demands applause * alike in every part.

The ROSE of NORWICH, see a nymph advance
To tread the mazes of the sprightly dance,
As gay as when some fifty years ago
Admiring crouds beheld her "sport the toe."
Nor scarce with less astonishment we see
The riper proofs of her agility,
When now, tho' not with youthful vigor blest;
She does, and ROSE can do no more, her best.†

With nature's soft benevolences grac'd,
With easy action and conception chaste,
With voice, whose liquid sweetness can impart
Those thrilling tones that penetrate the heart;
Simplicity's attraction BRUNTON tries,
Unskill'd by adventitious aids to rise,

And
assembly at a Bear garden, at Hockley in the Hoie. The present rage for the German Drama is scarcely to be wondered at if such plays be the choicest specimens of our Countrymen's productions.

* The audience are certainly as tardy in demonstrating their satisfaction as reluctant in expressing their disapprobation. An actor is invigorated by encomium, and he flags if he feel that his efforts and his merits pass unnoticed and unrewarded. Both extremes ought equally to be avoided.

† I regret that Mrs. CHESNUTT does not appear more frequently in character.— Her Nurse in the *Trip to Scarborough*, and her *Deborah Woodcock*, give a just title to respect and applause.

And proves, resistless modesty may trust
Her power to charm where art creates disgust.

O THOU, my last, best Theme, whose merits claim
The attribute of universal fame,
Whose virtues peer, preeminently proud,
Above the estimation of the croud—
To THEE I trust my verse, to THEE unknown—
Resign'd, if doom'd the sentence of a frown.—
Content, if e'er this offspring of my toil
Win from thy candour one approving smile.*

* On revising the printed sheets, I am sorry to remark that Mr. BEACHEM, Jun. had escaped my recollection. He is a young man of promise as a comedian, and entitled to better characters than are generally assigned him. This is the only omission that I am conscious of.

As few of the Gentlemen of the Theatre, I believe, venture to look into any other book than a play, I cannot dismiss this subject without recommending half a dozen lines of Mr. Pope's to their observation. The verses might with more propriety have been introduced into the text, but as situation cannot diminish their excellence or their truth, I shall transcribe them here. And thus I take my leave.

“ Each might his several province well command,
“ Would all but stoop to what they understand.
“ First follow Nature, and your judgment frame
“ By her just standard, which is still the same.
“ ULtering NATURE, still divinely bright,
“ One clear, unchang'd, and universal light,
“ Life, force, and beauty must to all impart
“ At once THE SOURCE, THE END, and TEST of ART.”

Pope's Essay on Criticism.

And proves, restless modesty may trust
Her power to charm where art creates disgust.

O Thou, my last, best Theme, whose merits claim
The attribute of universal fame,
Whole virtues peer, preeminently proud,
Above the estimation of the crowd—
To Thee I trust my verse, to Thee unknown—
Relig'd, if doom'd the sentence of a frown—
Content, if e'er this offspring of my toil
Win from thy candour one approving smile.*

* On revising the printed sheets, I am sorry to remark that Mr. BEAUMONT, Junr. had escaped my recollection. He is a young man of promise as a comedian, and entitled to better characters than are generally assigned him. This is the only omission that I am conscious of.

As few of the Gentlemen of the Theatre, I believe venture to look into any other book than a play, I cannot dismiss this subject without recommending half a dozen lines of Mr. Pope's to their observation. The verses might with more propriety have been introduced into the text, but as situation cannot diminish their excellence or their truth, I shall transcribe them here. And thus I take my leave.

Each might his several province well command,
Would all but stoop to what they understand.
First follow Nature, and your judgment frame
By her just standard, which is still the same.
Uprising Nature, still divinely bright,
One clear, unchang'd, and universal light,
Life, force, and beauty must to all impart
At once the source the End, and Last of Art.

I regret that Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, Junr. has not yet been able to give me a copy of his new play, which I have been expecting for some time.

